

**Statement: Congressman Robert Wexler
Europe and Emerging Threats Subcommittee**

**Markup of: H. Res. 578, Concerning the government of Romania's ban on
intercountry adoptions and the welfare of orphaned or abandoned children in
Romania.**

February 14, 2006

Chairman Gallegly, I join you in support of H. Res. 578 and commend Congressman Smith for his efforts to address this important issue.

In January, I traveled to Romania to meet with officials to discuss my concerns about this issue as well as advocate for my constituents, the Springer family, who have made every effort to reunite their Romanian adopted daughter Gabriella with her biological twin sisters -- Madalina and Manuela. This is a heartbreaking situation for the Springer's, the American "pipeline" families as well European, Israeli, Australian and other families globally whose adoption process has been halted under Romanian law that bans inter-country adoptions.

During my visit I met with Romanian President Basescu and other Romanian officials involved in this issue to urge them to address the pipeline cases as well as reexamine inter-country adoption as a positive way to ensure that Romanian children are placed in loving stable homes with the best opportunity for a healthy and productive life.

During my meetings Romanian officials expressed their desires to address this issue, past problems with inter-country adoptions as well as their inability to change their laws in light of their pending accession to the European Union. I believe that, as one of America's staunches allies in Europe, Romanian officials and people truly want what is best for their children. To this end, I am hopeful that this resolution today will send a signal about America's desire to see that these outstanding cases are resolved as well as about our willingness to work closely with Bucharest to address this issue.